

May 10, 1999

Docket Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

0530 '99 MAY 14 P3:14  
Re: Docket #98N-1038  
Irradiation in the  
production, processing and  
handling of food

Sirs:

It appears that in an effort to bail out corporate agribusiness, the government is hell bent on cramming irradiated food, literally, down our throats. This proposal is another typical attempt to undo the disastrous consequences of previous actions- or should I say inactions- of the FDA.

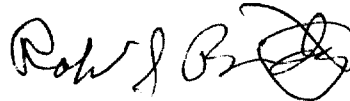
The real problem here is the method of production, processing and handling of food under the unsupervised control of the mega-corporations which have taken control of our food supply. Their indiscriminate use of antibiotics and growth hormones put us all at risk. Now you want to interject irradiation into this mix of chemical compounds laughingly called meat.

We know many of the dangers associated with irradiation of food stuffs. In Studies of test animals fed unextracted, whole irradiated food, reproductive damage was found in rodents and chromosomal damage in rodents, monkeys and children. We also know that irradiation destroys up to 50% of the essential vitamins in many food items. And, of course, there is the fact that irradiated foods have not been researched in scientifically rigorous studies of sufficient duration.

Another worrisome problem is the amount of nuclear waste produced by using irradiation to kill germs, literally raised in factory farm laboratories which couldn't be better designed to produce super germs. We are already drowning in a sea of nuclear waste which we as yet have no means of permanently storing.

It is my understanding that the FDA was created to protect consumers from foods and drugs which would make them sick. When will you get back to this relatively simple concept and do the peoples work instead of that the food corporations?

Robert S. Bridges

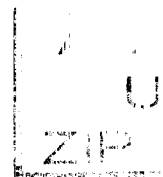


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